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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8326
INFO RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1741
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SUBJECT: TAJIKISTAN'S EARTHQUAKE RELIEF STATUS REPORT

REF: DUSHANBE 1465

11. More than a week after two earthquakes shook Tajikistan's Qumsangir District in Khatlon province on the southern border with Afghanistan July 29 (reftel), the Tajik government and donors continue to help displaced residents. Under the leadership of Deputy Prime Minister Ghulomov, the Tajik government established the National Emergency Commission to coordinate donor assistance, assess damage, and plan for reconstruction. Although the Tajik government has not yet officially declared the region a disaster area, President Rahmonov has made several calls to international organizations and wealthy Tajiks to provide assistance.

12. The damage to five settlements in the district is approximately \$22 million, according to the latest data provided by the United Nations Disaster Risk Management Project. The death toll has remained low at three people, but the earthquakes displaced more than 15,000 people, a higher number than estimated in the days immediately following the earthquake. Over 700 homes have been completely destroyed and over 1,200 partially damaged, many of them mud-brick structures common to Tajikistan's impoverished southern region.

13. Although the central government, NGOs, and international missions acted quickly to provide assistance such as temporary shelter, food, medical aid, and clothing to victims, the government has called for additional assistance. Health and disease prevention concerns authorities, as the earthquakes destroyed all health service structures according to the UN report. Sanitation conditions are poor, access to clean water is rare and there is a prevalence of malaria in the region. The government has requested soap, cleaning disinfectants, additional water containers, assistance in monitoring and preventing waterborne diseases, and help in surveillance and preventing malaria including distribution of mosquito nets. The Ministry of Emergency Services reported the food supply requirements have not been met and also asked for additional kitchen supplies.

14. The government has provided 1,200 tons of cement for reconstruction of homes and promised co-financing to those involved in rebuilding projects. An international NGO will assist in training people how to build homes according to safe

building standards for an earthquake zone. As a temporary solution, the government requested an additional 2000 tents for the homeless.

15. Through the NGO CHAP, the Embassy provided \$24,000 worth of emergency relief assistance in the form of clothing, sleeping bags, water containers, and medical supplies immediately after the earthquakes occurred. CHAP has verified that our relief supplies were properly transported and distributed to victims. Although the earthquakes are responsible for many gaps in services, the problems the people of southern Tajikistan face now reflect pre-existing conditions, including the country's impoverished status, lack of adequate health facilities and poor water supply system. Post remains involved in coordination activities with the government and international community to ensure that assistance provided will meet the immediate short term need as well as longer term development goals.

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